

the division, the discrimination, the rancor—we have to reach across it to find common ground. We have got to work together if we want America to work.

I want you to meet two more people tonight who do just that. Lucius Wright is a teacher in the Jackson, Mississippi, public school system. A Vietnam veteran, he has created groups to help inner-city children turn away from gangs and build futures they can believe in. Sergeant Jennifer Rodgers is a police officer in Oklahoma City. Like Richard Dean, she helped to pull her fellow citizens out of the rubble and deal with that awful tragedy. She reminds us that in their response to that atrocity the people of Oklahoma City lifted all of us with their basic sense of decency and community.

Lucius Wright and Jennifer Rodgers are special Americans. And I have the honor to announce tonight that they are the very first of several thousand Americans who will be chosen to carry the Olympic torch on its long journey from Los Angeles to the centennial of the modern Olympics in Atlanta this summer, not because they are star athletes but because they are star citizens, community heroes meeting America's challenges. They are our real champions.

Please stand up. [*Applause*]

Now each of us must hold high the torch of citizenship in our own lives. None of us can finish the race alone. We can only achieve our destiny together, one hand, one generation, one American connecting to another.

There have always been things we could do together, dreams we could make real which we could never have done on our own. We Americans have forged our identity, our very Union, from the very point of view that we can accommodate every point on the planet, every different opinion. But we must be bound together by a faith more powerful than any doctrine that divides us, by our belief in progress, our love of liberty, and our relentless search for common ground.

America has always sought and always risen to every challenge. Who would say that having come so far together, we will not go forward from here? Who would say that this age of possibility is not for all Americans?

Our country is and always has been a great and good nation. But the best is yet to come if we all do our parts.

Thank you. God bless you, and God bless the United States of America. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:14 p.m. in the House Chamber of the Capitol.

### **Statement on the Peace Process in Northern Ireland**

*January 24, 1996*

I welcome the report released today by the international body on decommissioning that was set up by the British and Irish Governments as one track of the twin-track approach for moving the Northern Ireland peace process forward. I am proud that the international body was chaired by a distinguished American, Senator George Mitchell. Senator Mitchell and his colleagues, General de Chastelain of Canada and Mr. Holkeri of Finland, have made a significant and positive contribution to the peace process, and I join the British and Irish Governments in expressing gratitude for their service.

The international body's report is based on the submissions it received from relevant and interested parties in the United Kingdom and Ireland. Together with the political track, I believe it will be a valuable tool for the Irish and British Governments as they work to reach the goal of all-party talks.

I encourage all the parties to use the report of the international body to advance the peace process. Its recommendations do not reflect the views of any one party, but the considered judgment of its members, who want only to help the people of Northern Ireland achieve a just and lasting peace. Their recommendations deserve serious and open-minded consideration by all who share that goal.

The United States stands by its commitment to support the efforts of the British and Irish Governments, the political parties and the people of Northern Ireland to create a bright and peaceful future for themselves and their children.

## Remarks in a Roundtable Discussion on Community Policing in Louisville, Kentucky

January 24, 1996

**The President.** Let me first of all thank the chief, the mayor and Governor Patton, Congressman Ward for making us feel so welcome. The Attorney General and her entire team who work on this are here, and we want to thank all of the citizens and the police officers who want to meet with us.

I'd like to make just a couple of brief points. First of all, when I ran for President and I began to travel the country looking for ways to bring the crime rate down, when I realized in every community I visited that ordinary citizens were worried about crime and violence, the one thing that came up over and over in all parts of the country that seemed to be working was what is now known generally as community policing. And when we finally passed the crime bill in 1994, which had been debated in Congress for 6 years, we had added to that crime bill a specific title to give funds to communities all across our country to create 100,000 new police officers. There was a reason for that.

Between 1965 and 1995, more or less, the violent crime rate in America tripled, but the number of police officers on our street increased by only 10 percent. And that's why we did that. Now, we're about a third of the way home. Louisville's gotten 16 police; I think Jefferson County has gotten a total of 36, something like that. But we're working hard to try to get more people out here.

It is now being recognized. I know one of the major news magazines had a cover story where the New York City Police Chief the other day, talking about how crime was coming down in America because of community policing. One of the things I asked the Congress to do last night was to support this program until we finished it.

I just want to make two other points if I might. This, in my opinion, is the way the Federal Government ought to relate to American citizens. We put up the money, and we say this money is for police, and you have to put up some. We'll put some, and here it is if you want it.

And then we developed a—I want to compliment the Attorney General and the Justice Department, they developed a pretty hassle-free way of applying for the money; there's not a lot of bureaucracy in it. And then we don't tell anybody how to train the police; we don't tell them how to deploy; we don't tell them how to relate to the community. That's all things that have to be decided here at the local level. That's none of our business. We just know that we have to do what we can to give you the resources necessary to achieve the goal.

The second point I want to make, just to emphasize what has already been said, it is obvious to me that there are basically three components to success. One is having the police out there properly deployed. And the second, and maybe the most important, is having some relationship with the community. That's why I asked the American people last night to respect and work with their police officers, because if you don't have that then this won't work.

The third thing I want to say—I want to compliment the mayor—is that within this whole framework our biggest problem now is rising levels of violence among juveniles nationwide. And the mayor also is participating in another one of our programs and got some funds to start, I know, some sports teams and other things here to make a special effort with young people. And that's the last thing I want to emphasize. You know, we just got so many of these children out there that are in trouble, having difficulties. And the police cannot do that alone. They need people to support them in organizing and coming up with the resources to give the children in areas with high rates of crime something positive to do. And I think that Louisville's got a lot to be proud of on all fronts. I'm glad to be here, and I've already said more than I meant to. I'd like to listen to you now.

*[At this point, Mayor Jerry Abramson introduced Carolyn MacLuton, past president, Community Oriented Policing Board, 4th Police District, and Nick Altieri, president, Mayor's Block Watch Council, who discussed community involvement with the police in Louisville.]*